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20th ANNUAL REPORT of the AURORA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE 1940

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To Promote the Civic, Industrial, Commercial and Social Welfare of Aurora

To The Members:

1940 has been an unusual year for the Chamber of Commerce, as for the world at large.

While carrying on the normal program of promotion and protection of the welfare of Aurora, as outlined in this report, there have been extra activities requiring attention of the organization.

Frankly, there has been much effort, properly directed, but unfortunately, not productive of desired results. Nevertheless, the energy has been worthwhile. The bid for the $8,400,000 air-engine research laboratory is a case in point. It took weeks of work and substantial expenses, but while Aurora was not chosen, the effort was of much benefit to our city.

Considerable material has been provided the National Defense Agencies and we are continuing our close cooperation with the Army and Navy departments as a service in national defense.

This Annual Report we commend to your attention. It is a summary made possible by your loyal cooperation.

Yours respectfully,

A. ROY PEFFERS,
President

HOWARD N. YATES,
Executive Secretary

ACTIVITIES REPORT

in brief . . . .

AGRICULTURAL

Host to 900 rural school children from Kane, Kendall, DuPage, and Will Counties, provided trips to points of interest. Awarded trophies in Young Men's Division in each of Wheatland, Lily Lake, and Big Rock Plowing Matches. Awarded trophy in Neatest Dairy Farm contest.

Conducted 11th Annual 4-H Club-Chamber of Commerce Corn Contest.

AVIATION

Active, high rated contestant in the nationwide bid for the $8,400,000 Air Engine Research Laboratory. While along with 71 other unsuccessful bidders, Aurora nevertheless received recognition of the War Department and the National Advisory Committee on Aeronautics.

Secured the establishment, in Aurora, of a non-college ground school of aeronautics.

Extended invitations to numerous branches of the aviation industry to locate in Aurora.

Developed a comprehensive airport plan to be available when means of financing can be assured.

CONVENTION

Entertained a number of state and district conventions including Illinois Well Drillers Assoc., Illinois Assoc. of County Officers, Illinois State Police Officers Assoc., North Eastern Division Illinois Education Assoc., the Illinois Holstein-Friesan Breeders Assoc., and others. Total delegates in excess of 5,000 people, a source of new income to Aurora.

Also invited additional conventions for 1941.

INDUSTRIAL

Investigated, corresponded with, and visited a number of industrial prospects. Offered substantial moving expenses in justifiable circumstances.

Are still working in the eight month of negotiations with a very substantial firm and will continue until the issue is closed favorably or otherwise. Anticipate a final decision within 30 days.

Advertised and publicized Aurora's Industrial advantages in metropolitan papers and trade magazines.

Assisted local industries in the routine of bidding for defense orders.

INDUSTRIAL ACCOUNTANTS

Held regular monthly meetings, with exception of summer vacation period, bringing together the industrial accountants and comptrollers of member firms. Each meeting presented the opportunity to discuss problems of accounting which face the average firm. In numerous instances speakers, expert in their line, were brought in to lead the discussion.

LEGISLATION AND TAXATION

Made known to legislators of this district, both state and national, the views of this organization on pending legislation, supporting legislation believed to be to the

welfare of Aurora and opposing that not considered beneficial.

Supported particularly the Walter-Logan bill which was passed but vetoed and the Smith amendments to the National Labor Relations act.

Furnished members with valuable information concerning Occupational Sales Tax, Wage and Hour Law, Old Age Benefit Law, and Unemployment Compensation Laws.

HEALTH AND SAFETY

Entered Aurora in the National Inter-Chamber Health Conservation Contest, helping to coordinate thereby the health defenses of Aurora.

Presented to the city three special flags; one to be flown each day that there was no previous day's accident; one to be flown when there was a previous day's personal injury or accident; and one when there was a previous day's fatal accident. Presented on May 11th, the black flag did not require appearance until September 9th, 1940. Fatal accidents were cut more than in half.

Clean-up Paint Up Week was observed by a questionnaire check-up of every home through the cooperation of the grade schools and Boy's and Girl's Scout organizations.

MEMBERSHIP

Sponsored the "Keep Aurora Ahead" membership Campaign in May which increased the membership to 550.

Conducted the 19th Annual Meeting and Banquet at which John C. Metcalfe was the speaker.

Held a Fall Membership Frolic at the Aurora Country Club September 19th.

Issued roster of membership.

Issued the monthly index of Aurora Business containing the following information: Industrial Employment, Sales Tax Paid in Kane County, No. credit reports, Bank Clearings, Bank Debits, Postal Receipts, Building Permits, Telephones in Service, New Passenger Car Sales, Relief Cases, No. Placements by Illinois State Employment Service, W.P.A. Employment.

Answered a miscellaneous number of inquiries for the members.

MODERN HOMES EXPOSITION

April 9, 10, 11, 12 conducted the Aurora Modern Homes Exposition at the Cotton Mills Building at which 54 exhibitors acted the host to 21,000 visitors.

Negotiated for the 2nd Annual Modern Homes Exposition to be given at the same location March 11, 12, 13, and 14th, 1941.

ROADS

Cooperated with highway authorities in highway improvements and maintenance.

Reported favorable action on hard road from Oswego to Yorkville, a step in the road from Aurora to Ottawa; hard road from Aurora to Montgomery on the west side of the river; continuation of Butterfield Road to North Aurora, development of Church Road.

PUBLICITY

Provided constant news items for use in local papers.

Issued monthly Aurora Progress.

Arranged publicity for the "Keep Aurora Ahead" campaign.

Aug
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Provided material for stories in metropolitan papers and national and state magazines.

CELEBRATION

Worked with Mr. Ralph Budd and fellow officials of the Chicago Burlington and Quincy Railroad to adequately celebrate the 90th Anniversary of the Founding of the Burlington Railroad in Aurora.

Carried to successful conclusion a parade, pageant, open-house and luncheon.

Secured nationwide publicity for Aurora by radio, newsreel, and newspaper.

TRAFFIC (Freight)

The freight traffic committee held occasional meetings on traffic problems.

500 truck owners and operators met at the Masonic Temple on February 2nd to hear a full discussion of the new Illinois Motor Truck Act.

A sub committee visited Rockford, Moline, Peoria, and Springfield to study the operation of the traffic bureaus of those cities.

RETAIL

Conducted following trade promotion events: February Semi-Annual Dollar Day, Spring Opening Week, Clean-up paint-up week, National Better Homes Week, Aurora's May Super-Bargain day, August Semi-Annual Dollar Day, Back to School Week, Fall Festival, Farm Home Week, Lay It Away Week, Aurora's Fall Super-Bargain Day, plus various Month-end Sales.

Presented a full two semester course in salesmanship under the direction of Miss Janet Marks and with the cooperation of both the East and West Boards of Education, also the Illinois Department of Vocational Education.

Sponsored action leading to the formation of the Broadway lighting Committee which culminated in the outstanding improvement of that street lighting system. Participated in the cooperation of the entire community in celebrating that accomplishment.

Presented the 2nd Annual "Santa on Parade" the largest and most spectacular ever presented in Aurora. This was done by cooperation of the Aurora Playground Commission, and the W.P.A.

Entertained 18 out-of-town Boy Mayors.

Provided Christmas lighting and bells in the business sections.

Presented the Giant Talking Santa Claus to the children of Aurora and community for a period of fifteen days.

Entertained boys at the Hallowe'en party in the Armory through the cooperation of the playground department.

MISCELLANEOUS

Maintain a clearing house of commercial, industrial and civic information.

Maintain a file of civic and fraternal organizations and their principal officers.

Answered hundreds of inquires by mail, telephone, or wire about all phases of Aurora's business and industry.

Maintain a library of city directories of over 125 cities.

Warned business and citizens of known petty commercial and other rackets.

Did the multitude of little things that would go undone if there were not organized effort to do them.

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1940 OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS

A. ROY PEFFERS - - - - - - - *President*
E. W. SIMONS - - - - - - *First Vice-President*
ARTHUR L. PODOLAK - - *Second Vice-President*
D. J. DeFRATES - - - - - - - - *Treasurer*

A. G. Bale	F. G. Hess
Wallace E. Brennan	Jacob Potteiger
C. I. Carlson	R. L. Savage
Howard Dewey	J. Carl Schmitz
Dr. John W. Dreyer	Barnabas F. Sears
Wm. B. Greene	Dr. Chas. B. Thompson

FRANK B. GRAY - - - - - *National Councillor*

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1940 COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Automobile Dealers' Association - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - Arthur Newquist, *President*
Agricultural - - - - - - - - - Fred W. Zabel
Burlington Anniversary - - - - - Howard N. Yates
Convention - - - - - - - - - Ward Gosselin
Defense Survey - - - - - - - - E. E. Lungren
Finance - - - - - - - - - Arthur L. Podolak
Health - - - - - - - - - - George R. Perrine
Industrial - - - - - - - - Wallace E. Brennan
Industrial Accounts Division - - - - - E. J. Emeny
Legislative Affairs - - - - - John Alexander, Jr.
Merchants' Division, Executive Committee - Alan Erlenborn
Public Affairs - - - - - - Glen R. Wortman
Publicity and Forum - - - - - - Clarence Biever
Roads - - - - - - - - - - H. B. Bushnell
Safety Council - - - - - - - - - R. A. Barker
Traffic - - - - - - - - - - E. R. McKnight

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STAFF

Howard N. Yates - - - - - *Executive Secretary*
Alma V. Keeler - *Secretary Membership and Accounts*
Virginia M. Jones - - *Secretary of Correspondence*

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